

Write a policy that requires recess to be scheduled immediately before lunch for most or all grades.



Definition: To meet this criterion recess must be scheduled immediately before lunch. A policy must be written which includes a recess and lunch bell schedule.

Rationale: Having recess immediately before lunch will help

- Improve student behavior on the playground, in the cafeteria and classroom
- Students waste less food and drink more milk. This leads to increased nutrient intake
- Students will be more settled and ready to learn upon returning to the classroom
- Students enjoy their food more and try healthier options

Recess before lunch ensures that children will come to lunch less distracted and ready to eat. It will also increase the likelihood that students will take time to eat, try healthier food, and enjoy their lunchtime more. In a recent study when recess was scheduled before lunch, school children consumed more calories and total nutrients. This helps children stay more alert and focused throughout the rest of the day.¹

1. Journal of the American Dietetic Association, *Position of the American Dietetic Association: Local Support for Nutrition Integrity in Schools*, 106(1), January 2006

Resources

Changing the Scene

A Guide to Local Action

Pages 21-22

NFSMI Study <http://www.nfsmi.org/Information/Newsletters/insight24.pdf>

Western Dairy Council Article

<http://www.nutritionexplorations.org/pdf/sfs/recess.pdf>

Recess Before Lunch Guidebook

<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/schoolfood/recessBL.html>

Assignments

School Coordinator Assignments

- Determine school's current policy
- Determine how school will incorporate policy
- Get PTA and parent input
- Review policy
- Introduce policy in faculty meeting
- Promote awareness of the policy among school leaders and teachers
- Assess teacher awareness of the policy

Mentor Assignments

- Provide school coordinator ideas, resources, and research to support this policy
- Write policy, give draft to school coordinator and principal
- Submit a draft of the policy to your LHD
- Revise policy if necessary and submit to principal for endorsement
- Provide school coordinator with promotion ideas
- Include the final policy end-year report

Gold #31 Ideas

- Talk to another school in your area that has successfully implemented Recess Before Lunch
- Observe another school before implementing it in yours
- Look up research that encourages recess before lunch and list benefits
- Present this idea to teachers, administration, and parents in a well organized presentation
- Involve everyone in the process because it will affect them
 - Talk about it often, encourage positive attitudes
- Ask a local health department contact to attend a meeting where scheduling recess before lunch is being discussed
- Be well organized before changing the schedule, think about possible problems
- You don't have to make the change all at once try it first with the upper grades
- Use different colored flags to let students know when it is time for them to come in for lunch
- Don't give up easily; give it a chance to work!
 - Remember change takes time. The first week or month may not run smoothly. Allow for time to fix any problems that arise and be patient.



Recess Before Lunch Policy Template

A policy defines an action a school will be taking to improve their health environment. Policies make lasting changes and stay with the school through faculty and administrative changes.

A Gold Medal Schools policy must include an Intent, Rationale, Reinforcement, and the principal's signature. Use this template to write your policy (all information is required).

A sample policy for this criterion can be found on the next page.

The policy must include...

- ☐ Intent
 - “Recess will be scheduled **immediately** before lunch”
 - Include recess and lunch bell schedule
- ☐ Rationale
 - Support for this policy
- ☐ Reinforcement
 - How this policy will be communicated to appropriate people
 - “This policy will be reviewed each year”

Recess Before Lunch Policy

Intent: Green Meadow Elementary will schedule recess immediately before lunch. Each class will be assigned a letter; this will help the students know when to come in for lunch. Students will be dismissed for recess at the appropriate time. After a fifteen minute recess the playground duty will blow a whistle and show the letter to indicate which classes will then go in for lunch. The students will line up and go into the school to wash their hands. They will then line up for lunch. When the student's twenty-minute lunch is over, their teacher will come to pick them up for class.

The lunch schedule for all grades is as follows:

Grade	Letter	Dismiss to Recess	Recess Pick Up, Wash, Line Up for Lunch	Teacher Pick-Up for Class
Second	A	11:30	11:50	12:15
Second	A	11:30	11:50	12:15
First/Second	B	11:35	11:55	12:20
First	B	11:35	11:55	12:20
First	C	11:40	12:00	12:25
Third	C	11:40	12:00	12:25
Third	D	11:50	12:10	12:35
Fourth	D	11:50	12:10	12:35
Fourth	E	11:55	12:15	12:40
N/A	E	11:55	12:15	12:40
Fifth	F	12:00	12:20	12:45
Fifth	F	12:00	12:20	12:45
Third/Fourth	G	12:10	12:30	12:55
Sixth	H	12:15	12:35	1:00
Sixth	H	12:15	12:35	1:00

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Recess before lunch ensures that children will come to lunch less distracted and ready to eat. It will also increase the likelihood that students will take time to eat, try healthier food, and enjoy their lunchtime more. In a recent study when recess was scheduled before lunch, school children consumed more calories and total nutrients. This helps children stay more alert and focused throughout the rest of the day.¹

Reinforcement: This policy will be reviewed each year. Faculty will be made aware of this policy at faculty meeting. Parents will receive a letter informing them of this new policy in their back to school packet.

PRINCIPAL ENDORSEMENT

Principal's Name

Principal's Signature

Date

1. Journal of the American Dietetic Association, *Position of the American Dietetic Association: Local Support for Nutrition Integrity in Schools*, 106(1), January 2006